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The Garden, the Fields and
the Woods

SHE PLANTED
A GARDEN

ALBERT L. BERRY

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ALBERT L. BERRY

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TO HER WHO PLANTED THE
GARDEN

To you who do not know her
Still her heart is open wide;
And you who really know her
Will find your love inside.



SHE PLANTED A GARDEN

She planted a garden and it grew through the
years;

'Twas nourished with prayers, 'twas watered
with tears;

'Twas a garden of kindness, of thought and of
deeds,

And she bound it with love like a rosary of
beads.

She planted a garden in the world's doubting
heart,

And faith grew again in love's counterpart;
And the blossoms of hope and the fragrance
of prayer

Ran over its walls and spread everywhere.

O garden of promise, O garden of tears,

O garden where love blooms all through the
years,

O garden of faith, O garden of strife—

The world is her garden and love is her life.



THE FORERUNNER

There is no pulsing of the forest brown,
And mountain tops are bleak and gray;
The trees' cold fingers all are dripping wet;
The housedog shivers as he stops to bay.

A robin comes and dances all alone,
From pathless way a brown thrush
wings his flight.
The sun drops down between the trees at
noon,
The crocus signal fires again to light.

The hyacinth, her lamp still burning low,
Sits all alone beneath her roof of sod,
And keeps her little flame a vesper lamp,
And waits to hear the whispering voice
of God.

But lo! A mucky leaf is stirring now—
A face as pure as consecrated nun—
The fair arbutus throws her window up,
Her finger tips reach out and touch the
Sun.



THE TURNING OF THE TIDE

I know a cottage garden fair,
Far down beside the restless sea,
There in my tired hours I sit,
And dream the dreams that cannot be.

I hear the bugling bluejays call;
The tom-tit comes to preen his wing;
Down by the shore the kildees cry,
And in the meadows kinglets sing.

And here I come my dreams to mend,
And throw the world's control aside,
To brim my cup with visions new,
And feel the turning of the tide.



'NEATH THE SUNFLOWER'S TENT

Have you never had a garden
Where the hollyhocks grow tall,
And their many colored windows,
Overlook your garden wall?

Where the purple morning glory,
With his trumpet calls the Sun,
And the primrose stands and listens
Like a little white-capped nun.

Where the Sweet pea climbs the fences,
All her fragrance to unfold,
And the daisies tell your fortune
'Neath the Sunflower's tent of gold.

Where the iris builds her castles,
And the peony lifts her dome,
And the myrtle quilts the pathway,
To the doorsteps of your home.

If you have not such a garden,
Tapestried with flowers gay,
Though you have the wealth of India,
Half your life is thrown away.



“WHO IS COMING?”

“Who is coming?” said the crocus,
As she poked her golden head
From beneath the old earth’s cover,
As she scrambled out of bed.

“Who is coming?” said the violet,
As she peeped from ’neath the sod
Lifted by the tender fingers,
Of the ever present God.

“Who is coming?” said the tulip,
As she threw her shutters wide,
And the jonquils stood on tiptoe
Looking out on every side.

“Who is coming?” said the myrtle,
As she ran along the fence,
In her mouth a tiny blossom
As the winter’s recompense.

“Who is coming?” said the cowslip,
With her golden buckled shoes,
And the bluebells all were ringing
For they too, had heard the news.

Then a little wind came running,
Puffing breaths of summer air,
“’Tis the sunshine that is coming,
And it’s coming everywhere.”



THE LOST PLUME

A wild bird came to my garden wall,
 On her head was a golden cap;
A wild bird's song she sang to me,
 And a feather she flung in my lap.
"Come, live with me," I said to the bird,
 "Why sing to the woods alone?
Come, build your nest in my hawthorne bush,
 And make my heart your home."
"I love the woods," the wild bird said,
 "Their temples were built for me;
I love to hear the rhythmic song
 Of the brooks as they trot to the sea,"
"I love to sing in the great tall pines,
 Though their limbs are bare to the bone.
For I know that God is listening,
 Though I sing there all alone."
"My home is curtained with green each year,
 And never a door is latched;
The old moon's lamp hangs on my porch,
 And my roof with stars is thatched."
So away flew the bird to the lonely wood,
 But her charm did not depart;
I lost the plume she flung to me,
 But her song is still in my heart.



A TABLE SPREAD FOR TWO

“Stay a moment,” says the pansy,
“Ere you hurry to the street,
I’ve a blossom I would give you,
That I’ve filled with fragrance sweet.”

“Stay a moment,” says the tulip,
“I’ve a chalice filled with dew,
And the snowdrop here is waiting,
With a string of pearls for you.”

“And the violet too is waiting,
Wearing such a pretty frock,
And the sweet peas with their ringlets,
Climbing up the hollyhock,”

And a primrose, O so dainty
Says, “A cup of tea I’ll brew,
If you’ll wait I’ll spread my table,
Spread it big enough for two.”

And a little honeysuckle,
Says she knows ’twill be no sin,
If she twines herself about me,
Just enough to hug me in.

O, how many, many children,
In love’s garden as we go
Call to us with laughing voices,
“Do not hurry, hurry so.”



THE DANCE OF THE FLOWERS

'Twas early dawn; the winds were asleep,
And the silvery mist from below,
Hung like the banners of the sea,
Or a veil of powdered snow.

The dainty fingers of the dawn,
Strung pearls upon the flowers,
And cunning spiders quilted nets
In all the nooks and bowers.

The golden moss with yellow sleeves,
Ran all along the wall,
And told the thistles in the street
"We're going to have a ball."

A trumpet flower his bugle blew,
And the opening march called out,
An aster white and scarlet thyme
Were waltzing all about.

A jonquil threw her purse of gold
Down in a larkspur's lap,
And danced a reel with a dahlia grand,
While a sunflower held her cap.



She Planted A Garden



A silken poppy with crinkled gown,
 Came in with a lordly stock,
But the way she leaned upon his arm,
 Gave the chaperons a shock.

A primrose in her slippers white,
 And a violet with apron of blue,
Each wore a rosary of pearls,
 All made from the crystal dew.

The feathery pink went sweeping by,
 Holding up her silken skirt,
While a meadow-rue looked up in her face,
 She's such a dainty flirt.

The sweet peas with their phrygian caps,
 Were leaning o'er the gate,
To gossip with the hollyhocks
 Who also came in late.

Then a sunbeam opened its yellow purse,
 And his riches threw o'er the wall,
The flowers all scrambled to pick up the gold,
 And that ended their charming ball.



THE KEEPER OF THE GOLD

I watched the quiet twilight come out of the
tent at night,
Her nimble fingers gathering gold that day
had left in flight,
She hid her rosy treasure 'neath the evening's
dark'ning fold;
And the stars with twinkling torches came
searching for her gold,
But they never found her riches, and when
the hills were gray,
She threw her gold far o'er the east, and van-
ished with the day.



MY SUMMER GARDEN

Along the walk she flames in royal pride—
The marigold, with yellow ruffles wide,
And, with a scornful smile, looks down
As primrose fair puts on her dainty gown.

The honeysuckle peeps through lattice old,
And lifts her cup, all spun of finest gold.
A damask rose that leaned against the wall,
Sweet william sees, then lets her kerchief fall.

The hollyhocks, with badges white and red,
Have reared their temples where the flowers
wed.
Old fashioned pinks, and ox-eye daisies tall
Have naught to wear at periwinkle's ball.

The royal coxcomb, and the lovely stocks
Make love to poppies shy, in crinkled frocks.
The cool moon flower shuts her bloom from
sight,
And leaves the key alone with silv'ry night.

So grows my garden 'neath the summer sky,
And sheds no tears, though death is drawing
nigh.



THE FLIGHT OF AUTUMN

'Tis now September's golden prime,
At eve the piping quails come near;
The thistle tos't her crown afar,
Into the mellow atmosphere.

And o'er the hills the autumn comes,
With sandals made of brightest gold,
Leaving her foot-prints in the field,
In forest deep and fen and wold.

The leaves are palsied on the trees,
And spirit-like the haze drifts low;
Along the fences and the fields
Like sentry stands the golden glow.

But now the frost with savage breath
And cutlass whetted by the night
Strips all the gold from field and wood—
And sandalled autumn puts to flight.



THE CROWN ON THE CLOVER

Who gives the crown to the clover,
The gold to the meadow weeds?
Who hangs upon the barberry bush
Its rosary of beads?

Who powders the hills with silver,
And carpets the heaven with gold?
Who lights the night-flies sparkling lamps,
And carries the stars in His fold?

'Tis He who rounds the planets,
And guides them in their flight;
'Tis He who moulds the tear-drop
That sorrow sheds at night.

Here in His great cathedral
Its golden lighted dome,
I worship with a thousand worlds,
And feel myself at home.



ANOTHER DAY

A cool white mist comes from the ocean gray,
And curtains all the meads within the
fold;

The sweetness of the common dawn I feel—
The meadow songs that never will grow
old.

A breath like winter comes from mountain
tops,
And chills the pearls now strung upon the
vine;

The ragged moon begs at the door of morn;
The white lips of the dawn are touching
mine.

The sea-white banners from the valleys rise,
Their fleecy garments trailing o'er the
green;

They skirt the woods, then up the mountain
climb,
And wave their plumes, then drift away
unseen.

And now, the long white fingers of the dawn,
With golden key, unlocks the door of day,
And o'er the world the sun now spreads her
gold,

And richer is for what she throws away.



IN THE FIELDS WE WENT
A-WALKING

My daughter and I went walking—
Her little hand in mine;
“I’m keeping step,” she said to me,
Though running half the time.

Away in the fields we wandered,
A gold-crest sang us a song;
In the woods the partridges a-drumming,
And the sun-beams following along.

The dogwood threw us her blossoms,
The laurel was flowering anew;
On the leaf of a wild rose was written,
“I’d like to go walking with you.”

The tad-poles frolicked in marshes;
And frogs were beginning to cry;
The kildees and plover a-mating,
And wild geese flying high.

Up the mountain’s steep we struggled—
The portals of day still ajar—
On the rim of the moon was a promise,
Below was the peep of a star.

Now alone I walk through the moorland;
The moon is crossing the bar,
No hand to my own is clinging,
And gone is the peep of the star.



THE GRISLED FOREST

I love the grisled forest lone and deep,
Whistling at night to put itself to sleep;
I love the maddened winds when in their
flight,
I hear them cry like famished wolves at night.

I love the lispng poplars tall and bare,
The swaying grasses bowing low in prayer,
A field of ragged cornstalks growing old,
Like half clad beggars shivering in the cold.

I love the lowing herd—their far-off call,
The cawing rooks on some deserted wall;
The glooming owl with eyes like golden beads,
The lonely crane low-flagging o'er the meads.

I love the farmhouse with its far-off light,
Its crippled gate that grinds its teeth at night,
The tinkling bell like some far distant rune,
The lonely watch-dog baying at the moon.

O, grisled forest shivering field and wold
O, lowing herd and farm-house lone and cold,
Thy winter bleakness to my heart is dear,
And all thy melodies I love to hear.



A GARDEN OLD

I know a garden over-grown with vine.
With fragrant musk-rose and with columbine;
Where honey-suckle mends with threads of
gold
The ragged hedge and crumbling wall grown
old;
Where stately asters court the meadow-rue
And shirley poppies tell their dreams to you;
Where fluttering sweat-peas spread their wings
of white
And snow-drops throw away their pearls at
night;
Where thistles in the corner often tell
How sweetly chimes the canterburybell.
There, golden sandalled shadows dance with
light,
And loitering twilight shuts the gates of night.



OCTOBER

The forests now all wear their Autumn dress
Of gold and red in Nature's loveliness.
The restless leaves the calling winds await
To romp and spin and cuddle 'neath
the gate.

Now little whips of hay lay on the field
And scattered cornstalks tell of harvest
yield.
The mullen stalks are seared and bare and
gray
Like altar candles where the grasses pray.

Gold-footed runs the sun where e'er I go
And lifts my soul beyond life's ebb and
flow:
And through the fields and woods I jog
along
While wayside minstrels fill my life with
song.



THE BIRTH OF THE FLOWERS

O, royal tulip with thy cruse of gold
Thy torch was burning ere the earth was cold;
And star of Bethlehem with face so fair,
When was thy chalice filled with fragrance
rare?

And sweet rhodora in thy sylvan home,
Who flamed the delta ere there was a Rome,
And thou, fair lotus, 'neath the Nile hast
bloomed

Ere Egypt flourished or great Thebes was
doomed;

Thou lowly violet, with thy cape of blue;
Pharaoh's fair daughter must have courted
you,

And flaming bush that blooms so near the sod,
We bow to thee who heard the voice of God.



EVENTIDE

How quiet is this hour of eventide
 When, spirit-like, a calm broods o'er the
 field:
The tented shocks of corn like wigwams stand
 Deserted now, 'reft of their summer yield.

The winds tiptoe across the scented grass,
 A softer glow falls on the distant hill;
A purple haze hangs in the vale below
 And all is hushed and holy, calm and
 still.

A mountain hymn comes softly through the
 trees
 A tired mother bows her head in prayer:
Soft eyes are slumbering; while the watcher
 dreams
 Night's comfort comes, and love and
 faith are there.

Now quivering comes a dimly lighted star
 Hung on the porch of heaven's distant
 gray
Then grows the light as if 'twere closer pushed
 That through the darkness we might see
 our way.



THE SONGS OF SUMMER

Go, listen to the music of the garden,
When murmuring bees are courting flowers
 rare;
When humming birds on membraned wings
 are singing,
And all the songs of Summer fill the air.

Go, listen to the whispering of the grasses,
As low they sing their sarabands of old—
The lowland music from the fen and moorland,
The cradle-songs from off the mystic wold.

Go, where the brooks their castanets are
 clicking,
With mountain songs they hurry to the sea,
Singing to woods and fields and meadows.
Attuned to all their wildwood minstrelsy,

Go, listen to the music of the forests,
When night winds on the tree-harps play;
Go hear the litanies on the hill tops,
And throw my feeble, lisping songs away.





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